

Buckeye Flyer

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Reservists recall memorable flight

by Maj. Richard C. Sater
445th AW/Public Affairs

A routine aeromedical-evacuation mission was transformed into something unforgettable for five reservists from the 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron (U.S. Air Force Reserve) here.

The passenger manifest for the April 12 flight aboard a C-17 Globemaster included former prisoner of war U.S. Army Pfc. Jessica Lynch and many others who had been injured in the war in Iraq.

When the C-141 Starlifter took off from here on April 10th, the 445th AES crew anticipated a typical return flight, bringing patients to the U.S. for medical care unavailable at overseas military posts. After all, the unit makes about two trips to Ramstein Air Base each month for that purpose.

Upon arrival in Germany, however, there were some surprising changes. Five of the medics, possessing the required certification, found themselves tasked for a special mission. Instead of returning to the U.S. aboard the C-141, they were assigned to the C-17 transporting Lynch and others to Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

Because of the heavy patient load, the mission required an augmented medical crew of three flight nurses and four medical technicians. The 445th team included two nurses, Capts. Jim Kern and Kimm Sandusky; and three technicians, Staff Sgts. Sandi



Staff Sgt. Hans Jagow (left, flightsuit) and Senior Airman Heidi Johnston-Mercer, (center, flightsuit) 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron assist in moving Pfc. Jessica Lynch off of the C-17 at Andrews AFB, Md. (Photo by Air Force News Service)

Golden-Vest and Hans Jagow, and Senior Airman Heidi Johnston-Mercer.

Two additional reservists — Maj. Sharon Carlson, McChord AFB, Wash., and Tech. Sgt. Sean Fowler, Charleston AFB, S.C. — rounded out the crew.

From the time the aircraft took off from Ramstein until it landed in Washington D.C., nearly nine hours later, the crew didn't rest. "We couldn't even stop to eat or use the latrine," Kern says.

"It was like the worst-case scenario you would get in training," Golden-Vest says. "Only it was real."

The military and civilian patients — 46 total — ranged from infant children to those of retirement age. Most of the patients, however, were soldiers and Marines en route home from Iraq.

Lynch may have been the best-known patient on board, but the crew didn't have time to think about it. "We didn't have just one hero on board. We had 46," says Sandusky.

In addition to dispensing medication, changing wound dressings, monitoring vital signs, and keeping the patients as comfortable as possible, the Reserve medics offered

See Lynch continued on page 3

A month to Remember

by Capt. Andre L. Saunders
445th AW/Protestant Chaplain

In 1867, women in Columbus, Miss., decorated the graves of dead soldiers from both the North and the South. There began a widespread feeling that a special day should be observed for honoring those who had, in valor, given their lives in the Civil War. Gen. John Logan, commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued an order designating May 30, 1868 for "Strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country, and whose bodies now lie in most every city, village, hamlet church yard, and military cemetery in the land." Thus Memorial Day became an annual day of remembrance.

Like those who have given their lives in valor for freedom, there are mothers who have given their tears, their wisdom, their hearts and made many sacrifices in the raising of their children. To those mothers who are longer with us, I can imagine that God honors them at His throne of grace. For those mothers who continue to help America stand strong, may God bless you and strengthen your spirit. Have a peace-filled Memorial Day and a Happy Mother's Day.

"I thank my God every time I remember you." – Philippians 1:3

Wing effort has not gone unnoticed

by Brig. Gen. Rusty Moen
445th AW/Commander

I attended the Air Mobility Command Commander's Conference the first week of April and can tell you that all of your efforts these past months have been noticed, and made a difference. Gen. Handy, AMC and U.S. Transportation Command commander, structured much of the conference agenda on Reserve and Guard issues such as mobilization and de-mobilization. Gen. Handy is a great supporter of the Reserve, and he and his staff are very impressed with what Wright-Patterson and our other two C-141C wings at March Air Reserve Base and Andrews Air Force Base have accomplished. Our aircrews and maintainers have generated higher in-commission rates and more flying hours than anyone thought possible prior to this conflict. Since the start of the war we have shifted our focus more towards the aeromedical evacuation role, and just this past weekend one of our aeromed crews provided medical care to former prisoner of war Pfc. Jessica Lynch and 46 other wounded troops from Ramstein, Germany to Andrews AFB. The 445th currently has 628 personnel mobilized.

This has definitely been a team effort in supporting the war effort. My thanks to our host base here at Wright-Patterson for all their support; to the Mission Support Group in handling all the mobilizations, thousands of questions, and in supporting our families, and to our contingency cell that has done a remarkable job in running the stage operation here at Wright-Patt. To this list I could easily add another hundred people who have quietly made a definite contribution to this latest effort. As commander I am extremely proud and grateful for all of your efforts.

Probably the best motivational and inspiring words I have heard or seen written during this war have come from a commentary by Ben



MacIntyre in the Times of London quoting a battlefield speech given by Lt. Col. Tim Collins, a 42-year-old commander of the Royal Irish battle group. Just hours before his troops went into battle, Col. Collins said this:

"The enemy should be in no doubt that we are his Nemesis and that we are bringing about his rightful destruction. There are many regional commanders who have stains on their souls and they are stoking the fires of Hell for Saddam. As they die they will know their deeds have brought them to this place. Show them no pity. But those who do not wish to go on that journey, we will not send. As for the others, I expect you to rock their world.

"We go to liberate, not to conquer. We will not fly our flags in their country. We are entering Iraq to free a people, and the only flag that will be flown in that ancient land is their own. Don't treat them as refugees, for they are in their own country.

"I know men who have taken life needlessly in other conflicts. They live with the mark of Cain upon them. If someone surrenders to you, then remember they have that right in international law, and ensure that one day they go home to their family. The ones who wish to fight, well, we aim to please. If there are casualties of war, then remember, when they woke up and got dressed in the morning they did not plan to die this day. Allow them dignity in death. Bury them properly, and mark their graves.

"You will be shunned unless your conduct is of the highest, for your deeds will follow you down history. Iraq is steeped in history. It is the site of the Garden of Eden, of the Great Flood, and the birth of Abraham. Tread lightly there. You will have to go a long way to find a more decent, generous and upright people than the Iraqis. You will be embarrassed by their hospitality, even though they have nothing..."

And in conclusion, Lt. Col. Collins told his troops:

"There may be people among us who will not see the end of this campaign. We will put them in their sleeping bags and send them back. There will be no time for sorrow. Let's leave Iraq a better place for us having been there. Our business now, is north."

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Lynch

(continued from Front Page)

some non-traditional care as well. "I let them talk. I listened," says Sandusky. "They just wanted to tell their stories."

Hearing the soldiers and Marines "talking about the fighting — the shooting" was an emotional experience, Johnston-Mercer says. "Your eyes just welled up."

She recalls fixing one soldier's bandage and then kissing her fingers and pressing them lightly against the injured arm. "I told him, 'there. I've kissed your boo-boo and made it all better!'" she recalls. "He liked that." The young man called her back several times to retie the bandage. "I think it was falling off on purpose."

She also recalls apologizing to one soldier whom she had to awaken to check his blood pressure. "He said he didn't mind. He said I was the prettiest [service member] he had ever seen," she says, laughing.

Former POW Lynch traveled with three medical attendants, and the 445th crew had minimal direct interaction with her as a result. She was also accompanied by her parents, siblings, and a cousin. "They didn't want her to be treated in a special way," Jagow says. "They felt that she was just the same as all the other soldiers on the plane."

Though the crew did not directly attend to Lynch, each member spoke with Lynch's family. "They're nice people. Mr. Lynch reminds me of my own dad," Johnston-Mercer says. She gave the family a memento for their daughter: a 445th AES patch with all of their names written on the back and a small inspirational book that she inscribed from the squadron.

"Her family was saying 'thank you' to everyone.," Sandusky says. "They appreciated all the crewmembers who helped" — aircrew as well as medical.

The most emotional moment of the trip occurred when the C-17 first crossed into U.S.-controlled airspace, and the pilots made the announcement. Some of the patients had tears in their eyes. "I never understood how much it means to come home," says Kern.

Upon landing at Andrews around 5:15 p.m., the crew prepared to disembark with

the patients. The reservists were surprised to discover a media frenzy in progress for the return of the former POW.

"We do this all the time," Sandusky says. "And we never have TV cameras covering it."

Reporters were not permitted to interfere with the deplaning procedures. "They were our patients," Golden-Vest says, "and we carried them off the plane, one by one" — including Lynch — or escorted those who were ambulatory. Waiting ambulances transported them to hospitals and medical centers in the Washington D.C. area.

The crew returned to Wright-Patterson by commercial air April 13, since their C-141 was still in Germany, completing another mission. The trip to Dayton gave each one time to reflect on the experience. They all agree it was exhilarating.

"To a patient," Kern says, "I think we made a difference in their lives."

One advantage that they appreciated was the use of the C-17, which offers a more comfortable ride than the crew is accustomed to. "It's quieter — easier to talk to each other. The lighting is better," Kern says. Otherwise, the rigorous, demanding tasks of providing in-flight patient care are essentially the same, whatever the airplane.

Still, "I like the rumble of my C-141," says Johnston-Mercer.

Though a number of reservists in the 445th AES (and the parent unit, the 445th Airlift Wing) have been mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Kern, Sandusky, Jagow, Golden-Vest, and Johnston-Mercer are not among them at this time. They participate in such missions as part of their regular Reserve duty, maintaining currency in their flying status.

After the memorable weekend, they returned to their civilian jobs — Kern at Miami Valley Hospital, Dayton; Sandusky at the Cincinnati Health Department; Jagow to classes at Wright State University, Dayton; Golden-Vest at the Reformatory for Women, Marysville,



Capt. Jim Kern and Kimm Sandusky, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, assemble stantions to accomodate patient litters prior to them being brought on-board the C-17. (Courtesy Photos)

Ohio; and Johnston-Mercer at Mount Carmel Hospital, Columbus.

Perhaps none of their aeromedical missions are strictly routine. But some — like the April 12 flight from Ramstein — are memorable in ways they never could have imagined.

"All the patients were so appreciative," Jagow says. "Even without Jessica Lynch on board, it would have been an awesome experience."

Capt. Sandusky, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, pauses for a photo with a patient during the flight to Andrews AFB, Md. (Patient cropped out to protect the right to confidentiality.)



Flying a different type of flag

Civil Engineers participate in Silver Flag exercise

Story by Staff Sgt. Charlie Miller

445th AW/ Public Affairs

(photos by Senior Master Sgt. Wil

McCutcheon and Master Sgt. Mike

Wheeler, 445th Civil Engineer Squadron)

"I'd never seen anything like it," said Airman Sean Fiedler, a heavy equipment operator with the 445th Civil Engineer Squadron. "It was just like a real war situation."

"We would be in a class and hear some booms outside," said Senior Master Sgt. Will McCutcheon, Superintendent of Operations at the CES. "It was the cadre blowing holes in the runway."

Fiedler and McCutcheon were part of a 58 members group from CES that returned recently from the weeklong "Silver Flag" training exercise at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., Silver Flag includes a realistic 2-day field exercise, and is designed to simulate conditions at a forward deployed environment.

"It was really something," said Fiedler, who operates 10-ton dump trucks, front-end loaders, excavators and other types of equipment that can construct runways and roads. He said he gained valuable experience during Silver Flag.



A grader sits off to the side awaiting it's turn to help repair the crater that was made in the middle of the runway. The training at Silver Flag gives 445th Civil Engineer Squadron troops the most realistic training possible.



An explosive charge detonates in the middle of the exercise runway, creating the crater shown above. The explosives are used to create realistic bomb damage to runways and taxiways.

"This time at Silver Flag the exercise was more meaningful, more focused to current events," said McCutcheon who has participated in several Silver Flags. "We had to deal with chemical warfare by being in different levels of Mission Orientated Protective Posture gear. The average time wearing the gas mask was between two and three hours."

And that was for all the CES members, whatever area they were in. Senior Airman Greg Compton worked in the liquid fuels area and did more than just wear his gas mask.

"I had never *worked* in MOPP gear before," Compton said. He

had, however, worn a gas mask in a number of classroom situations.

The two-day field exercise included scenarios that seemed to Compton and the rest of the CES members to change constantly.

"I was on a team of four in fuel distribution and during the exercise the cadre 'killed' two of the members and I ended up leading the team," Compton said. "It was like the Mel Gibson movie 'We Were Soldiers' where a non-commissioned officer or an infantry man is pulled out and asked 'How are you going to do this?' You can't always follow. You have to be able to step up into a leadership position."

"If you're going to make a mistake, make it during a training exercise, not in a real-world situation," Compton said. "If I'm in theatre and I'm tasked, I'll have a working





Firefighters from the 445th Civil Engineer Squadron brave the flames around this burning medi-vac helicopter to ensure that all the crew and patients are safely out of the aircraft.

knowledge of how things work. There was quality hands-on for my specialty.”

Compton went on to say that the exercise reinforced what he had learned already. He stressed that, for him, Silver Flag was not a training environment, but an exercise environment and the two are different. He worked with two members of a Kentucky National Guard unit and an active duty Staff Sgt. from Luke AFB, Ariz.

McCutcheon said that the exercise could not have come at a better time because if the CES were to be mobilized the equipment they used at Silver Flag would be exactly the same equipment they would use on active duty.

Senior Airman Will Van Gundy described the hands-on aspect of the exercise as really unique. He was able to work with equipment that he'd only seen in a career development course

Flames engulf the hulk of a simulated cargo jet as civil engineer firefighters attempt to bring the fire under control. This is just one of the exercises the firefighters will go through in the time at Tyndall Air Force Base's Silver Flag.

and training CD-ROMS. He was working during the exercise to set up a water distribution system at a bare base.

“This helps to bring you up to speed on the newest technology,” Van Gundy said.



Firefighters pull an injured person to safety, the injured person will be treated by the on-scene emergency medical technicians and then moved to further treatment.

“Definitely a good learning tool. I feel I can handle whatever they throw at me.”

The Silver Flag Contingency Training Site trains over 6,000 civil engineers and services career field members annually. Students hone their combat skills such as repairing bomb-damaged runways, setting up base facilities, disposing of explosives and similar wartime survival skills.

Simultaneously, units practice under simulated wartime conditions. Silver Flag was originally conducted here at Wright-Patt, but moved to Tyndall in 1972.



Aircraft surgeons

445th Maintenance "patient" load increases

by Staff Sgt. Charlie Miller
445 AW/Public Affairs

Performing complete maintenance, which could easily be called major surgery, on the 18 C-141's assigned to the 445th Airlift Wing is one thing, but having additional C-141's from Andrews Air Force Base, Md. and March Air Reserve Base, Calif. on top of your own lined up for your attention is another. Such is the tasking the 445th Maintenance Squadron in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

This mission? Quickly perform maintenance on all the planes, whatever base they are from, and get them back to flying and flying safely.

"We are working 12 to 14 hour days," said Maj. Kevin Chambers, 445th Airlift Wing, 445th Maintenance Squadron, commander. "It's a difficult mission in front of (my squadron) but it drives them harder to complete this."

Chambers said that they have experienced repeated changes in work shifts on top of the heavy workload and long hours but there have been no complaints. Also, there have been numerous teams from the squadron sent at the drop of a hat to fix planes stranded at other bases. Chambers described the lightening fast dispatches of maintenance troops as very common.

"It's been a pleasure for me to step back and just watch," the major said. "Traditional reservists and air reserve technicians are working side by side and exceeding mission requirements."

Capt. Rick Webster is a pilot with the 356th Airlift Squadron and he knows full well how important the maintenance squadron mission is; "They have the heart and dedication to keep the planes flying. I talk with maintenance or quality assurance every day and I know it's a very tough job."

Webster said that maintenance troops approach him "to talk airplanes" all the time. He said it's easy to see that they enjoy their jobs. Webster also said that many times after maintenance has worked

on a plane they get on the jet and fly with him and his crew to check out their work.

"That says a whole lot to me," Webster concluded.

Certainly, pilots rely on maintenance to ready the planes for safe flying. "We launch and recover aircraft and when they break, of course we fix them," said Tech. Sgt. David Roth, a hydraulics system journeyman, "They go nowhere (without maintenance)."

"You see our planes on television transporting some of the injured and that drives you, it makes everything you do on a daily basis worthwhile," said Senior Airman Russell Atkinson, a hydraulics systems specialist with the maintenance squadron. Atkinson, a traditional reservist was activated several months ago. He said his civilian employer, Midmark Corporation in Versailles, has supported him 100 percent.

Both Roth and Atkinson were just finishing up the 10-hour job of repacking a strut on a March ARB C-141. They weren't aware that the plane was not a 445th C-141 and it didn't really matter. The work had to be done and done right away. Keeping moisture out of the strut and its assembly is essential. The last step of the repair was applying a thick layer of super strong adhesive to the top of the assembly while wearing protective gloves. As they wrapped up the job Atkinson quipped "It's not going to win an art award." The plane was ready to fly, that's what counted.

Tech. Sgt. Scott Baker, a crew chief with the maintenance squadron working said that the planes go through major inspections every 420 days and home



Tech. Sgt. David Roth (right) and Senior Airman Russell Atkinson, (left) 445th Maintenance Squadron, work on resealing the strut of a C-141 from 452nd Air Mobility Wing, Calif. (Photo by Senior Airman Chris Polites)

station inspection every 70 days. He and his crew were pulling off panels inside a C-141 and checking the frame of the aircraft.

"We look for safety-of-flight items," Baker said. "We check for cracks, corrosion, and lubricate everything and put it back together." Baker said they are now in a current operation tempo where they spend about two-weeks on each aircraft instead of the usual four-weeks that peacetime ops tempo allows.

"We have inspection cards to go by and they tell us what to look for. Quality assurance follows us up," Baker said.

The maintenance squadron has a great deal of pride in what they do. Senior Airman Jason Mullgrav, a communications and navigations system apprentice summed it up well when he said "I'm happy every time I drive on base and know the planes are coming and going and that I'm a part of that."

Mullgrav, a Middleton resident and part-time college student at Miami University was activated a few months ago. His civilian employer, Tech Logic of northern Kentucky, has been supportive. The airman has been a maintenance "surgeon" for two years now. "I feel proud to be part of this mission. I know that the planes wouldn't work otherwise."

Welcome and Congratulations!

Promotions

Congratulations to the following personnel, recently promoted to the rank indicated.

First Lieutenant

Lisa Anderson, 445 AES

Captain

George Hilyard, 445 AES

Major

Brady Johnson, 445 CES

James Klein, 87 APS

Todd Mulhorn, 445 AES

Paul Neef, 445 LSS

David Pond, 89 AS

Matthew Smith, 356 AS

Richard Webster, 356 AS
Richard Williams, 445 AES
Donald Wren, 445 AMXS
Anne Yelderman, 445 LSS

Reenlistments

Congratulations to the following 445th AW members who recently re-enlisted in the Reserve.

SSgt. Scott Caldwell, 445 CES
SSgt. Robert Caskey, 445 MXS
SSgt. Donald Floyd, 87 APS
SSgt. Maria Schohn, 445 AW
TSgt. Robert Brown, 356 AS
TSgt. Timothy Emberton, 445 MXS
TSgt. Michael Fisher, 445 MXS
TSgt. Steven Grulick, 87 APS

TSgt. Charles Hatfield, 445 AMXS
TSgt. David Morgan, 445 CLSS
TSgt. Scott Ponchillia, 445 CLSS
TSgt. George Scott, 87 APS
TSgt. Terry Scott, 87 APS
TSgt. Barry Storer, 87 APS
TSgt. William Stringer Jr., 445 CLSS
TSgt. Brian Young, 445 SFS
MSgt. Samuel Byers, 445 MXS
MSgt. Toni Devuono, 445 AMXS
MSgt. Andrew Riess, 445 CLSS
MSgt. Curtis Shiner, 445 AMXS

Newcomers

Welcome to the following reservists, recently assigned to the 445th AW:

AB Nathan Hutchinson, 445 AES

AB Elisabeth Rehm, 445 SVS
A1C Eric Ochs, 445 AMXS
SrA Phillip Ice, 445 CES
SrA Earl Jackson, 445 LRS
SrA Brandon Maxie, 445 AMXS
SrA Michael Kinman, 445 MXS
SrA Jason Hague, 445 SVS
SSgt. Douglas Boeh, 445 AMXS
TSgt. Brian Coleman, 445 AMDS

Awards

Congratulations to the following 445th AW members who recently earned awards.

Meritorious Service Medal

MSgt. Jack Yeager, 445 MXS
MSgt. Garald Murphy, 87 APS
TSgt. Daniel Hysell, 87 APS

Organizing airlift chaos

by Senior Airman Robert Sperling
445th AW/Public Affairs

In a small room overflowing with papers, clipboards, coffee cups, people, and with walls coated with dry erase and magnetic boards painted by a rainbow of scribbled symbols and numbers, the Air Force Reserve's C-141 airlift operations are set in motion. This room houses the 445th Airlift Wing's Contingency Control Center.

The Contingency cell, as it is known, was "opened" for business at the end of January, when 4th Air Force and Air Mobility Command asked if the 445th could handle the task of operating the reserve C-141 contingency cell.

Lt. Col. Frank Fuller, Contingency Support Cell, commander, describes the circumstances surrounding the staffing selection for the cell. He recalled movies and cartoons with people lined up and a commander asking for volunteers to step forward — and everyone but the people not paying attention stepped backwards, he and Lt. Col. Steve Johnson were the two left out front.

"We, myself and Steve, didn't have any experience with this type of operation, and when it began crisis management took over," said Fuller. "I guess we've been doing a good job because TACC (Tanker Airlift Control Center, Scott Air Force Base, Ill.) said that we've had the greatest success rate for getting to our on-load locations with only one missed mission, and that was due to weather."

The 445th's Contingency Cell was originally stood-up to handle a portion of the Reserve's C-141 mission by coordinating the employment of 12 planes and 16 aircrews from three geographically separated wings located at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., Andrews AFB, Md., and the 445th here at Wright-Patt.

The 445th's cell is currently performing the job of roughly three different offices at TACC, said Fuller. "There were some bugs that needed worked out the first week, but we have since overcome those pains."

Fuller attributes the success of the C-141 contingency operations to the outstanding work and dedication demonstrated by the maintenance crews positioned at the various points, home and abroad.

The first couple of weeks, C-141 operations were coordinated between Wright-Patterson and TACC. Since then, TACC has assumed responsibility for the portion dealing with the movement of planes to specific locations, and the 445th's role continues to increase. While TACC controls the aircraft, the 445th controls the crews who fly the planes and also helps to facilitate their movement while operating Wright-Patterson as the primary C-141 staging point for the entire continental United States.

"Our role in the '141' contingency mission has become more suggestive than controlling as the mission has progressed, but that role is changing as well," said Fuller. "If we see a mission profile that isn't quite right or we see a potential problem with it, we raise our red flag and propose a solution or option to TACC."

The contingency cell stood-up and began operating with volunteers within 48-hours of notice, has since been activated, changed its authoritative position, and now funnels all the Reserve's C-141 missions out of Wright-Patterson AFB.

"The mission continues, and we will continue our reputation of excellence to ensure that the operation continues successfully," said Fuller.



Wing Notes

Wing Commander's Call

Commander's call will be held Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m., in the base theater during both UTAs. Please remember that sign-in is at the event. The 1st Sgts. will be collecting donations for the Dayton area veteran's hospital.

Spouse Appreciation Day

This year's Spouse Appreciation Day, titled, "Wind Beneath Our Wings," will be held Friday, May 9, 2003 between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. in the Kittyhawk Lodge, Bldg. 1197, Kittyhawk area. For more information regarding the event contact the Family Support Center at: (937) 257-3592.

Thrift Savings Plan - Open Season

Open Season for the Thrift Savings Plan began April 15 and ends June 30, 2003. Eligible members can enrol or adjust their contribution at this time. For more information regarding your Thrift Savings Plan eligibly please contact the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777 or logon to the web at www.tsp.gov.

Memorial Day, May 26, 2003

The "Memorial" in Memorial Day has been ignored by too many of us who are beneficiaries of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. The holiday can be practiced by:

- visiting cemeteries and placing flags or flowers on the graves of our fallen heroes.
- visiting memorials.
- flying the US Flag at half-staff until noon.
- flying the 'POW/MIA Flag' as well (Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act).
- participating in a "National Moment of Remembrance" at 3 p.m. to pause and think upon the true meaning of the day, and for Taps to be played.
- renewing a pledge to aid the widows, widowers, and orphans of our fallen dead, and to aid the disabled veterans.

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This racecar would not be possible without the support of our sponsors. The 445th Maintenance Squadron and Wing Crests have found their way onto various parts of the vehicles.

Mission accomplished

Maintenance volunteers get the job done

by Senior Airman Robert Sperling
445th AW/Public Affairs

In early October 2002, two small vehicles were rolled out of their trailers and delivered to the aircraft maintenance professionals of the 445th Maintenance Squadron.

Since that time, the vehicles have undergone extensive repair and restoration. The vehicles are the Thunderbird F-16 and NASCAR racecar go-carts of Indiana's active-duty Air Force recruiters.

Senior Master Sgt. Jack Yeager leads the maintenance team working on the vehicles. Working with Sgt. Yeager is: Tech. Sgt. Mark Monnig, Staff Sgts. Rob Caskey and Luke Schroeder, and Senior Airman Frank Saul.

The members have worked in the small amounts of free time that they have. In

between tasks to keep the more than 25 C-141s now positioned here "in the fight."

This is the second time the 445th has worked on the recruiter's vehicles. The recruiters approached the maintenance team with a request to help them protect their expensive recruiting tools, to do this they gave the team free rein to do what they could. The maintenance troops took the opportunity to show just how good they really are.

Part of "free rein" included making sure that anyone who is able to look closely at the vehicles knows who made them look sooo good!

The vehicles have been turned over to the recruiters so that more airman will cross into the blue and go above and beyond.

Photos by Maj. Ted Theopolos

